

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed May 10, 2000. In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed Claims 1-23 and 26-28 and rejected Claims 24 and 25. In order to advance prosecution of this case, Claim 24 has been amended. Thus, Claims 1-28 remain pending in this Application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowed Claims

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of Claims 1-23 and 26-28. These claims are not amended. Therefore, Claims 1-23 and 26-28 remain in condition for allowance.

Section 103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected Claims 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,974,398 issued to Hanson et al. in view of U. S. Patent 5,041,972 issued to Frost. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

Claim 24 has been amended to be dependent from independent Claim 23, which the Examiner has indicated is allowable. Thus, dependent Claims 24 and 25 that depend from independent Claim 23 are not made obvious by the cited art because they include the limitations of allowed Claim 23 and add additional elements that further distinguish the art. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should now be withdrawn.

B

CONCLUSION

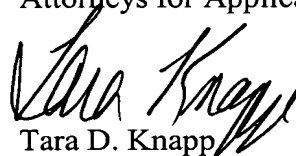
Applicants have now made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending Claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicants stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

No further additional fees are believed due in connection with this Amendment. However, should any fees be due the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge said fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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